

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Fig. 1. This sheet, which includes Figs. 1-3, replaces the original sheet including Figs. 1-3. In Figure 1, dots have been added to illustrate an exemplary feature of the invention.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet(s)
Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-5 are present in this application. By this Amendment, the specification has been amended. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The drawings were objected to as failing to comply with 37 C.F.R. §1.84(p)(5). The Office Action contends that reference character “b” is not mentioned in the description. To the contrary, however, reference character “b” is provided on page 6, line 138. Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

The drawings were further objected to under 37 C.F.R. §1.83(a). The Office Action provides that the continuous basis weight increase of claim 3 must be shown in the drawings. Applicants respectfully submit, however, that it is not clear how such a continuous basis weight increase can be shown in a drawing. A revised Fig. 1 is filed herewith with dots in varying densities in an effort to illustrate this feature of the invention. Support for this feature can be found in original claim 3 and the specification at, for example, page 6, lines 146-149.

Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

Claims 1-5 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,008,086 to Merry. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action contends that an inlet area metal fabric portion 34 “would be less dense (less basis weight) than the intumescent mat (32) (as disclosed in Table 1).” Applicants respectfully submit, however, that this conclusion is inaccurate.

As shown in Fig. 2b of the Merry patent, at an edge of the structure, a metal fabric (34) covers a mounting mat (32). Therefore, even with an open area of the metal fabric being less than 85%, a basis weight of the mounting mat (32) in an area where the mounting mat (32) is

covered by the metal fabric (34) could not possibly be lower than a basis weight of the mounting mat (32) in an area where the mounting mat (32) is not covered by the metal fabric (34). Indeed, the basis weight of the mounting mat (32) would be constant throughout any area. That is, the mounting mat (32) has a defined basis weight. Providing a layer of metal fabric (34) over an area of the mounting mat (32) could not possibly serve to lower the basis weight in that area.

In addition, Table 1 in Merry shows the test results of an erosion test. Table 1 does not show in any manner that the density of the area (32) is lower than the density of the area (34).

Applicants thus respectfully submit that the rejection of claim 1 is misplaced. With regard to the dependent claims, Applicants submit that these claims are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency on an allowable independent claim.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

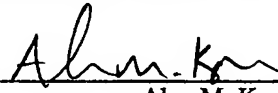
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are patentable over the art of record and that the application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable in order to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Prompt passage to issuance is earnestly solicited.

TANAKA et al.
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Respectfully submitted,

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FIG. 1

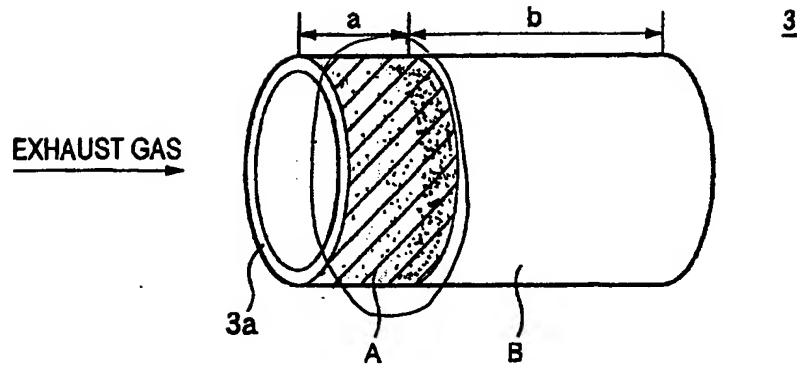


FIG. 2

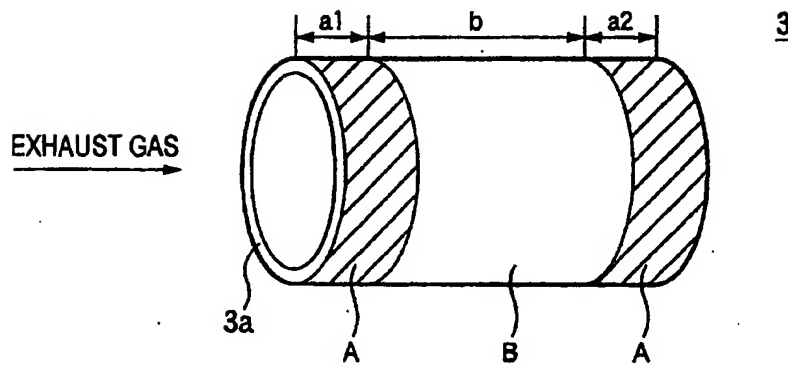


FIG. 3

